

# DUBBO & DISTRICT FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC



## Newsletter 48– May-June 2020 (Lockdown Newsletter)

Location: Ground floor – Two storey Community Arts Building Western Plains Gallery, Cnr. Gipps and Wingewarra Streets, Dubbo.

Opening hours: Tuesday 1.00-4pm, Thursday 2.00-6.00pm, Friday 10.00-1.00pm, Saturday 10.00-4.00pm

Society webpage: [www.dubbofamilyhistory.org.au](http://www.dubbofamilyhistory.org.au)

Society email: [info@dubbofamilyhistory.org.au](mailto:info@dubbofamilyhistory.org.au)

Postal address: PO Box 868, Dubbo. 2830 NSW

Society phone no: 02 6881 8635 (during opening hours)

### Management Committee

|                 |          |  |                     |
|-----------------|----------|--|---------------------|
| Linda Barnes    | 68878284 | <a href="mailto:martinandlinda@gmail.com">martinandlinda@gmail.com</a>   | President/Librarian |
| Lyn Smith       | 68850107 | <a href="mailto:baretsmiths@bigpond.com">baretsmiths@bigpond.com</a>     | Vice President      |
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| Kathy Furney    | 68825533 | <a href="mailto:kathyfurney47@gmail.com">kathyfurney47@gmail.com</a>     | Newsletter          |
| Lesley Abrahams | 68822242 | <a href="mailto:ljabrahams@bigpond.com">ljabrahams@bigpond.com</a>       |                     |

**Management Committee** Meets on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 10am in DDFHS Library. Members are welcome to attend these meetings, or simply contact any of the committee listed above if you have anything you would like discussed at the meeting.

**Newsletter Information** Please share any interesting information, news of an interesting website, or maybe a breakthrough with your family history, with other members. Contact Kathy Ph.68825533 or email [kathyfurney47@gmail.com](mailto:kathyfurney47@gmail.com) if you have anything that can be shared. We would love to print your item as it is exciting to hear about our members' research.

**Website and Facebook** Check out the website and Facebook regularly as there is often useful information on them. Regular updates, with information for our members, are being made to both, and always 'like' and 'share' our Facebook page where Karlyn has lots of interesting snippets.

2.....

**Society News** ☹️ ☹️ **Library still not open** ☹️ ☹️

**COVID-19 virus outbreak** is still impacting on our daily life in a huge way. Our rooms are still closed until further notice. Let's hope the situation improves soon and we can all get back to a relatively normal life. At this stage it is not known when we will re-open but rest assured, members will be advised as soon as we have an opening date.

Our society has been fortunate to have our Facebook manager Karlyn Robinson providing us with fantastic and interesting stories relating to "occupations in early days". These are appearing on our Facebook page, but are also being emailed to our members by Lyn Smith. Lyn has been enhancing the stories in an interesting way, so a big thank you to both committee members for their work.

**Siva Singh, a Punjabi Sikh**, discovered how deeply racism was entrenched in Australia in 1915, when he appeared in court at Benalla in north-east Victoria. The small, dark-skinned man with a distinctive pink turban had voted in the previous three federal elections. The local newspaper reported an "aboriginal native of Asia" was "very angry and kicked up ructions", especially after his case was dismissed and he was ordered to pay court costs.

Though Indian-born, Mr Singh was officially classed as a "natural-born British subject". Like Australia, India was part of the Commonwealth and sent troops to fight for the empire in the Great War. Mr Singh was both proud and patriotic, and wanted equal rights in his adopted country.



**Photo: Horse-drawn hawkers' wagons were once a common site in rural Australia. (Photo supplied by: John Henwood)**

He had arrived in Australia in 1897, along with thousands of his countrymen. They were considered guest labourers and forbidden to bring wives or family.

Mr Singh became a hawker or travelling merchant, selling household goods from a small horse-drawn wagon. He lived frugally, slept in his wagon, and though he sent much of his money home, he prospered. By 1915 he owned a large grazing property near Benalla but under the White Australia policy he was struck off the electoral roll. After a decade-long legal battle, he regained the right to vote in 1925.

While his story was barely known until recently, Mr Singh is now celebrated as a civil rights campaigner and trailblazing lay priest.

Mr Singh died in 1954. From Landline and ABC news.

3.....

**FamilySearch** has been exploring some fun and interesting ways to help individuals, families, and friends connect and deal with this difficult period of home confinements and social distancing.

First, FamilySearch.org/Together [1] is a new, growing resource of free, fun, personal and family activities to consider. Check it out.

Second, FamilySearch has been holding dynamic livestreams [2] on its social media (FamilySearch Facebook [3] and FamilySearch Instagram).

If you've missed any of the past events, you can catch up by watching them on the FamilySearch YouTube playlist [4].

FamilySearch livestreams help our patrons connect on social media and invite others to be a part of a vibrant community to learn, share, and support each other during this time of isolation and increased social media consumption.

The livestreams will occur **three times a week** for the foreseeable future. You can find them on **Instagram Instagram Tuesday** guests focus on connecting with living family members, storytelling, and the importance of journaling and record keeping during this unusual time.

**Instagram Thursday** features guests from FamilySearch. They share tips and tricks and answer patron questions live.

**FaceBook Wednesdays** are primarily focused on product and research tips and are targeted for a more advanced family history audience.

I might add all of the above technology is beyond me, but I am sure many of our members would be able to make use of this offer by Family Search.

**New Publication** from Family History ACT (FHA)CT the home of The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc. (HAGSOC). This society has just issued the 16th edition of Family History for Beginners & Beyond. It contains extensive references for beginners and for the more experienced family historian and is a practical guide to help readers trace their ancestry and family story. This book is written by Danny O'Neill who members may remember was instrumental in helping us fine tune the Vincent's Studio negative collection.

The publication has a long history and was first published as Family History for Beginners in 1981. The 10th edition was renamed Family History for Beginners & Beyond in January 1998. The most recent 15th edition was published in 2017 with major updates and amendments.

The 16th edition builds on these solid foundations and includes five new chapters – Australian land records, Chinese Australian ancestors, DNA, Military records, and Writing your story. The publication is B5 in size, spiral bound for ease of reading and contains 310 pages of revised, updated and new material. Whether you are beginning your research or are beyond the basics, this book is an invaluable reference guide for any family historian. Due to current health restrictions the book may only be purchased online at <https://familyhistoryact.org.au/index.php/shop/bookshop>.

Publication cost is \$39 for non-members and \$35 for HAGSOC members plus postage & handling costs of 1-3 copies \$14 via Australia post.

**Training Session** Dorothy Blake who ran the training session in July last year, titled "Accessing historic mental health records from asylums in New South Wales" has provided more information relating to this topic. She gave us an update of her research which was published in the September/October 2019 newsletter. The following is another update on her efforts to locate these records. They may assist anyone still trying to access mental health records and also show how persistence is absolutely necessary in family research.

*In the on-going saga of gaining mental health records, I have at last had a victory. After eight months, I finally received the records of my mother-in-law from Broughton Hall in Rozelle, Sydney in 1939. They were very comprehensive. However, it seems that, after applying to Concord hospital and South Sydney Health,*

4.....

*the records of Callan Park for her stay there in 1963 are not available. I could only find the dates of her confinement from State Records.*

*However, undaunted, I then applied for a letter of consent from NSW Health to access the mental health records of my paternal grandmother who was in Rydalmere Psychiatric Centre in late 1952. Having by now had some experience, I wrote a letter and enclosed copies of my birth and marriage certificates (to show change of name), my father's birth certificate and my grandmother's death certificate. Eureka! After only a week I had a letter of consent back. (Pays to know the system). I have now applied for these records and will wait to see if they are available. Stay tuned.*

**Upcoming Changes to BDM website** As advised in the last newsletter, the BDM website was being changed as part of a broader NSW government project to consolidate over 1,000 websites. The aim of the project is to make it easier for customers and business partners to find what they need, and to locate easy to understand, consistent information around Government services. We have been advised that the BDM homepage can now be found at [www.nsw.gov.au/bdm](http://www.nsw.gov.au/bdm) [2]. You will also find a handy translation tool at the top of the page, allowing you to have the whole web page translated to a range of languages.

**Society of Australian Genealogists** advise that due to restrictions on events as part of the COVID19 response, all of our events are currently being delivered online using Gotowebinar. We are planning on the assumption that such restrictions may well be in place for the rest of 2020. Unfortunately, a small number of events have been cancelled as they could not be delivered online. You can get the latest information about our events from the Events page of the SAG website.

When you register for an event, the confirmation email will contain information about how to join the event online. In many cases, this will require you to complete a further step of registering with Gotowebinar. If you have not used Gotowebinar before, you can find information about it on our website [HERE](#) [1].

All of our webinars are recorded, so even if you cannot attend at the scheduled time you can still book and receive the recording, provided you remember to complete the second registration step with Gotowebinar. If you have any difficulties, let us know and we will assist you.

Because of these changes in the delivery of our events, we have decided to open up our webinar program to non-members as well as members.

However, non-members will pay a bit more and season tickets remain available only to members. We will also be providing an occasional free webinar for members only.

With the exception of the Friday hangout sessions, you must register for events at least two days before the day of the event. This gives us time to make sure that your registration was completed successfully.

If you are a member, you need to log into the website to book at the member rate. You can also book by calling us on (02) 9247 3953.

**E.M. Fletcher Writing Award** The final entry date for this competition is 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020. The competition is for a family history story with 1500 to 2000 words. There is a \$1000 prize for best story. Check out The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra for full particulars on their website at [familyhistoryact.org.au](http://familyhistoryact.org.au)

*Keep well everyone, and thank you to all those who has re-joined for 2020. Please keep sending your stories into me for the newsletter, I already have items for the next issue but need more! Make sure you check our face book and web site for what is happening with our society.*